

U.S. Embassy Nassau
Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens
August 28, 2015

The following Emergency Message is being transmitted to alert U.S. citizens to the development and progress of Tropical Storm Erika.

As of 0800 EDT on August 28, The National Hurricane Center (NHC; www.nhc.noaa.gov) reports a tropical storm warning has been issued for the Turks & Caicos Islands, as well as the Central and Southeastern Bahamas. A tropical storm warning means that tropical storm conditions are expected somewhere within the warning area within 36 hours. Tropical storm conditions in terms of wind are expected to reach the warning area by Friday afternoon/evening. A tropical storm watch has been issued for the rest of The Bahamas, meaning that tropical storm conditions are expected somewhere within the watch area within 48 hours.

U.S. citizens residing and traveling in coastal areas in this region should be alert to flooding.

Tropical storms can escalate into hurricanes very quickly, limiting the time available for a safe evacuation. Travelers should apprise family and friends in the United States of their whereabouts, and keep in close contact with their tour operator, hotel staff, and local officials for evacuation instructions in the event of a weather emergency. Travelers should also protect their travel and identity documents against loss or damage, as the need to replace lost documentation could hamper or delay return to the United States.

The U.S. Embassy advises all U.S. citizens living in and/or visiting this region take certain basic precautions in preparation for a possible storm.

Supplies and Preparation:

- If you are living in this region: Ensure you have adequate supplies of food, water, medications, and other essential supplies on hand. It is not unusual for stores and shops to close before, during, and after a hurricane. Check your generators and make sure you have an adequate supply of fuel; cut down any dead foliage and remove any debris around your home; secure any items that could become dangerous flying objects (patio furniture, umbrellas, barbecues, etc.); have the tools and supplies on hand to secure your house (plywood, nails, shutters, etc.). Upper floors in high-rise buildings are at increased risk of windows being blown out, due to the fact that wind speed increases with height.
- If you are a tourist, consider leaving the area if you can. The Providenciales Airport in Turks and Caicos will be closing as of 6PM local time on Friday, August 28. It does not plan to reopen until Sunday, August 30 at 12PM local time. Local airports on the outer islands of The Bahamas may already have limited flights. If you decide to stay, talk to your hotel front desk to learn about the hotel's emergency plan for a hurricane. Notify your family and friends of your whereabouts and your plans until the storm passes. Be sure to have an adequate supply of necessary prescriptions and medications on hand.

During the Storm:

- Do not go outside, flying debris is lethal;
- Do not watch the storm from beaches as storm surge, riptides, and rogue waves are hazardous;
- Stay inside in an interior room of your residence (bathroom, large closet, or pantry). Choose a room with little or no windows that is located away from the exterior wall of the residence;
- Stay off your home/cell phone and radio. Keep all means of communication available for an emergency;
- If a member of your family sustains an injury during the storm, report the injury and degree of severity to the local authorities as soon as possible.

U.S. citizens in the Turks and Caicos and The Bahamas should monitor local radio, the National Weather Service and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. The U.S. Embassy will update this emergency message if new information becomes available. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

Small craft operators in the Turks and Caicos, Great Inagua, Mayaguana and Acklins islands should remain in port and small craft operators in the other islands of The Bahamas should not venture far from port.

U.S. citizens should also stay current with media coverage of local events, weather and marine forecasts, and monitor the [National Hurricane Center](#) and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. For official information from the Bahamian and TCI governments regarding weather conditions, please monitor ZNS or other local media outlets.

Additional information on hurricanes and storm preparedness may be found on our "[Hurricane Season-Know Before You Go](#)" webpage, and on the "[Natural Disasters](#)" page of the Bureau of Consular Affairs [website](#). Updated information on travel in The Bahamas may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States and Canada, or from overseas, 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Please continue to monitor the [Embassy's website](#) for updated information.

For any emergencies involving U.S. citizens, please call local first responders, which is 919 or 911 in The Bahamas and 911 in Turks & Caicos. Then contact the U.S. Citizens Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy's Consular Section, located at 42 Queen Street (across from the British Colonial Hilton Hotel), Nassau; telephone: 242-322-1181; after hours emergency telephone: 242-357-7004; ACS unit fax: 242-356-7174; e-mail: ACSNASSAU@state.gov; web page: <http://nassau.usembassy.gov>. The Turks & Caicos Consular Agency is located at 2 Venture Ct., Grace Bay Suite 102E, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos. The Consular Agent can be reached at 649-232-5713 or by email at talishajsimons@gmail.com and SimonsTJ@state.gov.